

# THE WATER CONSERVATION TRUST



## Charity Update

Registered Charity 1007648, c/o HQS Wellington, Temple Stairs, Victoria Embankment, London, WC2R 2PN



### Summer 2019



#### Message from the Chairman of the Trustees, Roger North:

As forecast in 2018, the Trust will spend £75,000 this year on its charitable activities. This exceeds our current income by £18,000, with the balance financed from reserves.

This is a conscious attempt by Trustees to maintain the momentum of commitment to our current beneficiaries, and to continue the search for projects within which our small contributions can make a difference.

Supporting this level of commitment needs a plan and Trustees are actively engaged in creating a medium-term plan which seeks to evolve to a situation where ambitious targets are sustainably funded.

Our focus is on education. We have successful schools and universities programmes, but we look to Water Conservators to identify more projects, especially in schools, where our skills and limited grants can make a difference. Typical of our work is our support to Hugh Myddelton Primary School in Islington and to vocational education in two special schools in North Wales. But we do other things as well, offering a range of prizes for environmental projects and giving support to City charities.

Trustees take grant decisions on recommendations from its Charity Committee. The work of this Committee is expanding and membership needs to be more widely cast, reflecting the Water Conservators' Company interests.

Funding for Trust activities comes mainly from the Members of the Company – for which the Trustees are extremely grateful. Not every member donates and I encourage new donors to join us.

#### Education – why it matters:

There is broad agreement that our relationship with the environment is challenging and in the medium-term things will get worse. The Trust works with schools and universities to improve understanding of the issues and to provide the skills required to combat them.

#### Highlights in this Charity Update:



*Chris Boardman, Olympic gold medalist at Tir Morfa*



*World Water Day in Guildhall Yard  
Executive Head of Hugh Myddelton Primary School,  
with Sheriff Liz Green*



*Bursary student Alex Hazelgrove-Planel  
wins Best Dissertation Award*

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## The Schools Programme

**Vocational education in environmentally sustainable jobs** has been supported by the Trust in two Welsh special schools for over ten years. Ysgol Tir Morfa in Rhyl is a Community Special School which caters for pupils aged between 3 and 19 years with a wide range of additional learning needs. Bike skills are in demand and the Trust agreed the purchase of equipment for a cycle repair workshop, including a bike stand.



Deputy Headteacher Phil Thomas wrote – “*Anticipating a greener future and the shortage of bike skills, the School has recently developed an on-site cycle maintenance workshop which requires additional equipment for which we'd really appreciate your support.*”

The equipment will also be used in the teaching of STEM subjects. The Trust approved a similar request from Ysgol Y Gogarth Special School. These grants are small but have a huge impact on the opportunities offered to schoolchildren.

Ysgol Tir Morfa is forging links in the community and has collaborated with the *Wheels for All* charity, taking students on a bike ride around Llyn Brenig using adapted bicycles. The school aims to become a recognised provider to deliver City & Guilds qualifications in Bicycle Mechanics, and to become a centre for disability riding in Denbighshire.

**Long-term support for primary education** in London Schools is a key activity for the Trust. Topographical surveys, such as the one carried out at Tir Morfa, offer the opportunity to reinforce the basic principles of simple maths, measurement, scale and mapping to Key Stage 2. It was agreed that Hugh Myddelton Primary School would jointly look to develop a pilot, starting with the after-school STEM club in the summer term. Heyne Tillet Steel, users of Autocad have offered help with the software.

Water Conservation Trust links with local primary schools led to over 60 children participating in a World Water Day environmental exhibition sponsored by the Worshipful Company of Water Conservators and the

City of London in Guildhall Courtyard. The three themes of the exhibition were: using water wisely, what not to put down your drain, and plastic waste in rivers and oceans. The event was supported by key environmental groups and consultants. Around 60 pupils attended the very successful event.

## Cheapside Water Fountain Launch



As part of the celebration events leading up to World Water Day, the Master and Lady Mayoress unveiled the new drinking water refill fountain in Cheapside on 20 March. Children from Hugh Myddelton school were in attendance, proudly showing the Albatross models they had made out of discarded plastic, reflecting the adverse effects of plastics on our oceans.

## River Education Packs for Schools



School Education Pack - Pond Dipping Equipment

The River Holme Connections Charity is working in partnership with the Peak District National Park Authority education staff to run river education sessions for primary school children. It wants to produce a school river education pack for all the primary schools and high schools in the River Holme catchment. This is actively supported by Water Conservator Lynva Russell and the Trust has agreed to give financial support for the education packs, including one for the River Holme Connections team itself.



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## The Universities Programme

The Universities Programme has supported over 120 students with their fees for Masters degrees in 'our' subjects. Currently the Trust is supporting students at 11 universities.

The Company also awards prizes for students with the best dissertation on the courses it supports. The range of topics is very wide and covers both historic issues, such as water and environmental pollution, and future issues, such as the consequences of waste disposal and plastics reuse. Two awards were made at the Myddelton Court Lunch in January 2019.



Prize-winners Thomas Booth and Gareth Williams with Past Master Peter Hall

The Hydrogeology Department at the University of Birmingham is one of the best in the UK. Prize-winner **Thomas Booth's** dissertation was entitled **Hydrogeological study for environmental assessment of tailings storage facility using flow and transport stochastic modelling**. This dissertation looked at ways of monitoring leachate from established waste sites, which may cause pollution.

**Gareth Williams** from Queen Mary University submitted his dissertation entitled – **Castor fiber as a Natural Flood Management tool in a Sussex catchment** (castor fiber is a European beaver). Many claims are made of the pluses and minuses of reintroduced species and this looks at science behind catchment benefits.

Three awards were made at the Election Court Lunch in April 2019 by the Master. **Lili Dreyer** from Brunel University London, whose dissertation **Developing a sustainability framework for fashion upcycling companies** was judged by the university to be the best, identifies what needs to be done by designers of fashion goods to promote recycling.



High fashion has a very short shelf-life and steps need to be taken at an early stage to plan for reuse. The purpose was to identify sustainability issues in fashion upcycling.

Areas explored were toxic microfiber release, and lack of recyclability. Lili has started her own company in her native Denmark to take the theory into practice.

Although the Trust does not usually support overseas activities, leaving that to those better equipped, dissertations reflect the universities' global reach.

**Alex Hazelgrove-Platel** from Cambridge University whose dissertation: **Sustainability of water services: A review of international development programme approaches to rural water access in Nepal** was judged by the university to be the best. This is especially pleasing because he was also our Bursary Student in 2018.



Alex with Nepalese villagers discussing sustainability

Billions of people across the world have gained access to safe drinking water but there is a growing realisation that access is neither enduring nor sustainable. Alex examined four development programmes in Nepal, concluding that 'business as usual' approaches were not enough to achieve sustainability. Government policy and development programmes needed to shift their focus to maintaining and improving access.

**Nameerah Khan** from Oxford University whose dissertation: **Lived experiences of arsenic-related psychosocial distress in rural Bangladesh** was judged by the university to be the best. UNICEF and the World Bank advocated the use of wells to tap into deeper groundwater but with over 8 million wells constructed, approximately one in five is contaminated with arsenic.



Arsenic causes cancer and skin lesions which have a devastating impact on rural life, employment, poverty and healthcare. Nameerah set out to capture those experiences and make recommendations.

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## Keeping in touch with beneficiaries

Participating university staff and students are always welcome at Company events. During the last six months over 20 have attended. Especially popular was the 2019 WET 10 event focusing on plastics in the environment.

In April, Nameerah Khan was accompanied by **Patrick Thomson**, whose name may be familiar – he was our Wadham Oxford Bursary student in 2010 and pioneered mobile phone enabled remote monitoring of rural handpumps in Kenya.



*Patrick Thomson (with note-book) and Tim Foster, both Bursary holders*

This work was the subject of a crowdfunding appeal by Oxford University in June 2019. Our latest Bursary holder at Wadham Oxford, **Patrick Sullivan**, arrived fresh from rowing for Oxford in the 2019 Boat Race.

## Student Eats

**The NUS's Student Eats programme** supports sustainable food enterprises on campuses and in the community. In the last two years, the Trust has offered enterprises the chance to win between £200 and £1,500 to support a Student EATS project to improve the water efficiency of their operations and to raise awareness of the importance of water conservation. In 2018, the Trust received four applications and made two awards.

**University of Stirling Students' Union project** – *Green and Blue Space/Grow, Love, Eat*. This is a very well-established community garden on the main campus, managed by student and staff volunteers for health and wellbeing reasons, and food production. Funding is mainly for the purchase of a medium-sized automated greenhouse with a 2000litre storage water harvesting system, to allow crops requiring warm conditions to be grown under glass.

**University of Sussex project** – *Sussex Roots* – is a proposal for two water catchment projects (on a polytunnel and a shed roof) of what will ultimately become an automated rainwater harvesting system for a small, well-established, campus-based vegetable and fruit-growing system with a fire pit and seating.

## Maidstone Sea Cadets

The WCT continues to fund a berth on the training ship TS Royalist for the best cadet in Maidstone Sea Cadets. The winner in 2018 was Able Cadet Cameron Cook-Clarke and the award ceremony took place in December 2018.



*CO Sam Stevens, Trustee Trevor Harrington and Able Cadet Cameron Cook-Clarke*



*TS Royalist*

**The Worshipful Company of Water Conservators** supports a range of City of London charities. In the last year, the beneficiaries have included the Hackney Carriage Drivers' Magical Disney Tour, where over 100 Black Cabs take terminally ill children to Disneyland Paris for the weekend, the Army Benevolent Fund, Treloar School & College for disabled young people and for the Water Conservation Trust itself.

**In addition to donations received from Water Conservators, the Trustees are grateful for assistance from:**

**Environmental Services Association  
Education Trust**

 **WAMITAB**

**Mister Gees Foundation**

 **The institution of  
environmental sciences**

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